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ever they sank their infrequent wells suggested any agricultural possibilities, they were careful to keep the thought to themselves.

One day, however, one of the men in the Pullman, instead of leaning back regretfully, descended from the train, hired a horse, and went out into the mesquite-dotted waste. He told the man from whom he hired the horse that he was a prospector, and, in a manner of speaking, he was. Being, incidentally, the manager of one of the largest and most profitable ranches in California, he was as familiar with the vagaries of the desert as a cow-boy is with the vagaries of his horse, and, morever, he understood the science of irrigation from I toN. After a few days of quiet investigation he dropped into the commissioner's office in Deming one morning and filed a claim for several hundred acres of land. Most of those who heard about it said that he was a fool of a tenderfoot who was throwing away his time and money, but some of the wise old cattlemen looked worried. Within a fortnight he had erected his machinery and was drilling for water. And wherever his drills went down, there water came up: fine clear sparkling water—gallons and gallons of it. It soused the thirsty desert and turned its good-for-nothing sand into good-for-anything loam. The seeds which the far-seeing Californian planted sprouted, and the sprouts became blades, and the blades shot into stalks of alfalfa and corn and cane—and the future of all southern New Meico was assured.

The news of the discovery of water in the Mimbres valley and of the miracles it had effected spread over the country as though by wireless, and sun-tanned horny-handed men from half the states in the Union began to pile into Deming by every train, eager to take up the land while it was still to be had under the hospitable terms of the Homestead and Desert Land acts. It was in 1910 that the Californian, John Hund, sunk his first well; when I was in the office of the United States Commissioner in Deming the other day I found that the nearest unoccupied land is now sitteen miles from the city limits.

Should you ever have occasion to fly over New Meico in an aeroplane you will have no difficulty whatever in recognizing the Mimbres valley; viewed from the sky it should look exactly like a bright green rug spread across one end of a vast hardwood floor. Most of the valley holdings were, I noticed, of but ten or twenty acres, comparatively few of them being more than fifty, for the New Mexican homesteader has found that his bank account increases faster if he cultivates ten acres thoroughly rather than a hundred superficially. This lesson they have had hammered into them not alone from experience but from observing the operation of a couple of almond-eyed brethren named Wah, hailing originally, I presume, from Canton, who own a twenty-three-acre truck farm near Deming. Those vineyards on the slopes of Capri and those farmsteads clinging to the rocky hillsides of Calabria, where soil of any kind is so precious that every inch is tended with pathetic care, seem but crude and amateurish efforts when compared with the legaths to which these Chinese brothers have carried their intensive farming. Though watered only by a small and primitive well, their farm graphically illustrates what can be accomplished by paying attention to those little things which the American farmer is accustomed to contemptuously disregard, as well as being an object-lesson in the remarkable variety of fruits and vegetables which the valley is capable of producing. These Chinamen make every one of their acres produce three crops of vegetables a year. Not a foot of soil is wasted. They actually begrudge the narrow strips which are used for paths. Fruit-trees and grape-vines border the banks of the irrigation channels, and peas, beans and tomatoes are grown between the rows of melons. A drove of corpulent porkers attend voraciously to the garden refuse, and even the reservoir has had its usefulness doubled by being stocked with fish. The Brothers Wah would, I doubt not, have found still another use for their reservoir by raising in it the Egyptian water-lily were it not for the fact that the New Mexicans are notoriously not lotus-eaters. It is paying attention to such relatively insignificant details as these which makes J. Chinaman, Esquire, the best gardener in the world. It pays, too, for they told me in Deming that the Wahs, from their twenty-three-acre holding, are increasing their bank account at the rate of eight thousand dollars a year. After noting the cordiality with which they were greeted by the president of the local bank, I did not doubt it.

I have seen many remarkable farming countries—in Rhodesia, for example, and the hinterland of Morocco, and the Crimea, and Saskatchewan, not to mention the Sacramento and the Imperial valleys of California—but I can recall none where soil and climate seemed to have combined so effectively to befriend the farmer as in the Mimbres Valley. Imagine what a comfort it must be to do your farming in a region where you never have to worry about how long it will be before it rains, nor tramp about in the mud afterward. As the annual rainfall does not exceed eight inches, there is a generous margin left for sunshine. Instead of praying for rain, and then cursing his luck because it doesn't come, the New Mexican farmer strolls over to his artesian well and sets the pump a-going. From the view-point of health it would be hard to improve upon the climate of the Mimbres valley, or, for that matter, of any other portion of New Mexico, its elevation of 4300 feet, taken with the fact that it is in the same latitude as Algeria and Japan and southernmost California, giving it summers which are hot without being humid or oppressive, and winters which are never uncomfortably cold.

Like their neighbors in other parts of the Southwest, the farmers in the Mimbres valley have gone daft over alfalfa. To me—I might as well admit it frankly—one patch of alfalfa looks exactly like another, and they all look extremely uninteresting, but I suppose that if they were netting me from fifty to seventy-five dollars an acre a year, as they are their owners, I would take a more lively interest in them. I never arrived at a town in New Mexico, dirty, hungry and tired, but that there was a group of eager boosters awaiting me at the station with a dust-covered automobile. "Jump right in" they would say. "We have an alfalfa field over here that we want to show you. It's only about thirty miles across the desert and we'll get you back back before the hotel dining-room is closed." They're as enthusiastic about a patch of alfalfa in New Mexico as the Eskimos of Labrador are about a stranded whale.

If you have an idea that you would like to be a hardy frontiersman and wear a broad-brimmed hat and become the owner of a ranch somewhere in that region which lies between the Gila and the Pecos, it were well to disabuse yourself of several erroneous impressions which seem to prevail about life along the Mexican border. In the first place, you can dress just as much like the ranchmen whom you have seen depicted on moving-picture screens as you wish to—fleecy chaparreros and a horsehair hat-band and a pair of spurs that sound like an approaching four-in-hand, and all the rest of the paraphernalia—for they are a tolerant folk, are the New Mexicans, and have become accustomed to all sorts of queer doings by newcomers. In many respects they are the politest people that I know. When I was in New Mexico I carried a cane, and no one even smiled. But the newcomer must not imagine that he can ride madly across the ranges, at least in the vicinity of the towns, for he is more likely than not to be hauled up before a justice of the peace and fined for trespassing on someone's alfalfa field or cabbage patch. (Cabbages, though dreadfully prosaic, are about the most profitable crop you can grow in New Mexico; they pay as high as three hundred and fifty dollars an acre.) And the intending rancher must make up his mind that he will have to begin at the beginning. New Mexico is no place for the agriculturist de luxe who expects to sit on the piazza of his ranch-house and watch the hired men do the work. No, sirre! It is a roll-up-your-sleeves-spit-on-your-hands-and-pitch-in land where everyone works and is proud of it. And there is always enough to do, goodness knows! This is virgin soil, remember, and first of all it has to be cleared of the pinon and mesquite and chaparral which covers it. This clearing and grubbing costs on an average, so I was told, about five dollars an acre, but you get a supply of firewood in return—and there's nothing that makes a cheerier blaze on a winter's evening than a hearth heaped with the roots of mesquite. In other countries you chop down your fuel with an ax, in New Mexico you dig it up with a spade. Then there is the matter of well-digging which, including the cost of boring, machinery and housing, works out at from fifteen to twenty-five dollars an acre. Since the construction of several large power-plants, the cost of pumping has been greatly reduced by the use of electricity. It is quite possible, of course, for the five or ten-acre man to secure tracts close to town with all the preliminary work done for him, water being provided from a central pumping plant and his pro rata share of the capitalized cost added to the price of his land, which may be purchased, like a piano or an encyclopedia, on the instalment plan. That will be about all, I think, for facts and figures.

One of the interesting things about the settlers in the Mimbres Valley is that, so far as any previous knowledge of agriculture was concerned, most of them were the veriest amateurs. One man whom I met had taught school in Iowa for a quarter of a century, but along in middle life he decided that there was more money to be made in teaching corn and cabbages how to shoot than there was in teaching the young idea. Another was a Methodist clergyman from Kentucky, who told me that he had never had a real conception of the hell-fire he preached about until he started in one broiling July morning to sink an artesian well in the desert. Still a third successful settler had been a physician in Oklahoma, while there are any number of "long-horned Texicans" as the New Mexicans dubs the Texas cattlemen who have turned farmer. Scattered through the country are a few Englishmen; not of the club-lounging remittance-man type so common in the prairie provinces of Canada, but energetic hard-working youngsters who are earnestly engaged in building homes for themselves in a new country and under an adopted flag. Not all of the Englishmen who have come out to New Mexico have proven so steady or successful, however, for a few years ago an English syndicate purchased a Spanish land grant of some two million acres in the vicinity of Raton and sent out a complete equipment of English managers, superintendents, foremen, butlers, valets, men-servants and other functionaries, not to mention coaches, tandem carts, a pack of fox hounds, and other paraphernalia of the sporting life. A man who witnessed their detrainment at Raton assured me that it was more fun than watching the Greatest Show on Earth unload. It was a great life those Englishmen led as long as it lasted—tea at four every afternoon, evening clothes for dinner, and then a few rubbers of bridge—but it ended in the property being taken over at forced sale by a group of hard-headed Hollanders who harnessed the four-in-hands to plows, used the tandem carts for hauling wood, set the hounds to churning butter, and are making the big place pay dividends regularly.

Some two hundred miles north of Deming as the mail-train goes is Albuquerque, the metropolis of the state—if the term metropolis can properly be applied to a city of not much over twelve thousand people—set squrely in the center of the 122,000 square-mile parallelogram which is New Mexico. Albuquerque is a railway center of considerable importance, far from there one can get through Pullmans north to Denver and Pike's Peak, south to the borders of Mexico and its revolutions, and west to the Golden Gate. One of the things that struck me about Albuquerque—and the observation is equal applicable to all the rest of New Mexico—is that instead of having weather they enjoy climate. It is pretty hard to beat a land where the moths have acharnce to eat holes in your overcoat but never in your bed-blankets. Climate is, in fact, Albuquerque's most valuable asset, and she trades on it for all it is worth—and it is worth to her several hundred thousand dollars per annum. It is one of the few cities that I know of where they want and welcome invalids and say so frankly. They could not do otherwise with any consistency, however, for half the leading citizens of the town arrived there on their backs, clinging desperately to life, and were lifted out of the car-window on a stretcher. These one-time invalids are today as husky, energetic, up-and-doing men as you will find anywhere. Heretofore Albuquerque has been much too busy catering to the wants of the thousands of tourists and invalids who step onto its station platform each year to pay much attention to agricultural development, but without the town are several thousand acres of as fine healthy desert as one will find anywhere outside of the Sahara. They are enclosed, as though by a great garden wall, by the Manzano ranges, and the gentleman who whirled me across the billiard-table surface of the desert in his motor car told me that the Government now has an irrigation project under consideration which, by damming the waters of the Rio Grande will reclaim upwards of four hundred thousand acres of arid land. And the great Government irrigation projects now in operation elsewhere in the Southwest have shown that water can produce as many things from a desert as the late Monsieur Hermann could from a gentleman's hat. So one of these days, I expect, the country around Albuquerque, from the city limits to the distant foothills, will be as green with alfalfa as Ireland is with shamrock.

They have a commercial club in Albuquerque that is a club. At first I thought I had wandered into a hotel by mistake, for, with its spacious lobby its busy billiard tables, its handsome rugs and furniture, and the mahogany desk with the attentive young clerk behind it, it is about as

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Contest No. 2944 Serial No. 07791

NOTICE OF CONTEST

Department of the Interior, United State Land Office, Las Cruces, New Mexico, December 18, 1913.

To Seth Martin, of Deming, N. M., Contestee:

You are hereby notified that Oscar R. Cantwell, who gives Deming, N. M., as his postoffice address, did on December 3, 1913, file in this office his daly corroborated application to contest and secure the cancella ion of your homestead Entry No. 07791, Serial No. 07791 made November 26, 1912, for N. E. ¼, Section 24, Township 26 S. Range 9W, N. M. P., Meridian, and as grounds for his contest he alleges that said entryman, Seth Martin, has entirely failed to make the expenditure of one dollar per acre as is required by law to be made within one year from the date of the said entry and has wholly abandoned the said tract of land.

You are, therefore, further notified that the said allegations will be taken as confessed, and your said entry will be cancelled without further right to be heard, either before this office or on appeal, if you fail to file in this office within twenty days after the FOURTH publication of this notice, as shown below, your answer, under oath, specifically responding to these allegations of contest, together with due proof that you have served a copy of your answer on the said contestant either in person or by registered mail.

You should state in your answer the name of the postoffice to which you desire future notices to be sent to you.

JOSE GONZALES,
Register.

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Mrs. C. Y. Smith, of Des Moines, Iowa, is a visitor to the ciyt.